

**CLAIMS**

1. (canceled): A braid removal device, comprising:
  - (a) a first member having a linear edge along a side thereof;
  - (b) a second member having an inner edge, said second member being adapted to pivot about an axis with respect to said first member wherein said inner edge is adapted to contact at least a portion of said linear edge and wherein said linear edge and said inner edge are not adapted to cut hair when in contact with each other; and
  - (c) wherein said inner edge includes an opening when said linear edge and said inner edge are in contact with each other that is adapted to enclose a plurality of hairs that are adapted to secure a braid to said plurality of hairs, and wherein said opening is adapted to facilitate the removal of said braid when said opening is urged in a direction toward said braid sufficient to make contact with at least a portion of said braid.

2. (canceled): The braid removal device of claim 1 wherein said opening includes an arcuate recess provided in said inner edge.

3. (canceled): The braid removing device of claim 2 wherein said arcuate recess includes a semi-circle.

4. (canceled): The braid removal device of claim 1 wherein said inner edge includes a comb portion that extends for predetermined distance along a longitudinal length of said inner edge.

5. (canceled): The braid removal device of claim of claim 4 wherein said comb portion includes a first comb portion having a first tooth profile and density.

6. (canceled): The braid removal device of claim 4 wherein said comb portion includes a removable comb portion and wherein said first comb portion is adapted to be removed from said second member and wherein a second comb portion is

adapted to replace said first comb portion, said second comb portion having a second tooth profile and density that is different than said first tooth profile and density.

7. (canceled): The braid removal device of claim 1 wherein said inner edge includes a cutting portion that is adapted to cut hair, said cutting portion extending for a predetermined distance along said inner edge.

8. (canceled): The braid removal device of claim 7 wherein said cutting portion includes a sharp edge.

9. (canceled): The braid removal device of claim 8 wherein said sharp edge includes a section of a razor.

10. (canceled): The braid removal device of claim 1 including a first finger receptive member that is adapted to receive and cooperate with a first digit of a human hand and including a second finger receptive member that is adapted to receive and cooperate with a second digit of a human hand sufficient so that when said first digit is displaced

relative to said second digit, said linear edge is displaced relative to said inner edge.

11. (canceled): The braid removal device of claim 10 wherein said first finger receptive member include an opening into which said first digit is adapted to be inserted and wherein said second finger receptive member include a second opening into which said second digit is adapted to be inserted.

12. (canceled): The braid removal device of claim 11 wherein said opening provides access into a first recess provided in said first member, said first recess having a predetermined size and longitudinal length that is adapted to receive a portion of said first digit, and wherein said second opening provides access into a second recess provided in said second member, said second recess having a predetermined size and longitudinal length that is adapted to receive a portion of said second digit.

13. (canceled): The braid removal device of claim 12 wherein said first member and said second member are formed of a plastic and including a plastic member that is disposed

intermediate said first member and said second member and wherein said plastic member provides a hinge, and wherein said hinge provides said axis.

14. (canceled): The braid removal device of claim 1 including a protrusion attached to said device.

15. (canceled): The braid removal device of claim 14 wherein said protrusion includes a wider base portion that is attached to said device and a narrower end portion that is disposed away from said base portion and wherein said protrusion is adapted to function as a pick, and wherein said pick is adapted to loosen a plurality of natural hairs from said braid.

16. (canceled): The braid removal tool of claim 4 wherein said comb portion is adapted to contact said linear edge sufficient to force any hair that is disposed intermediate said comb portion and said linear edge to engage a plurality of teeth of said comb portion.

17. (original): A method for removing a braid from a plurality of natural hairs that are woven into a portion of said braid utilizing a single device, comprised of the steps of:

(a) providing a braid removing device that includes a first member having a linear edge along a side thereof, a second member having an inner edge, said second member being adapted to pivot about an axis with respect to said first member wherein said inner edge is adapted to contact at least a portion of said linear edge and wherein said linear edge and said inner edge are not adapted to cut hair when in contact with each other, and wherein said inner edge includes an opening when said linear edge and said inner edge are in contact with each other that is adapted to enclose said plurality of natural hairs, and wherein said opening is adapted to facilitate the removal of said braid when said opening is urged in a direction toward said braid sufficient to make contact with at least a portion of said braid and including a cutting portion attached to said device;

(b) contacting said cutting portion with said braid along a longitudinal length of said braid at a location

that does not contain any of said plurality of natural hairs sufficient to sever said braid;

(c) inserting at least a portion of said plurality of natural hairs intermediate said first member and said second member in said opening;

(d) urging said first member toward said second member;

(e) displacing said device along a longitudinal length of said portion of said plurality of natural hairs toward a remaining portion of said braid until contacting said remaining portion of said braid; and

(f) further displacing said device along said longitudinal length of said portion of said plurality of natural hairs an amount sufficient to dislodge said remaining portion of said braid from said portion of said natural hairs.

18. (original): The method of claim 17 including a first additional step of including a pick with said device and a second additional step of using said pick to loosen said natural hairs from said braid prior to the step of further

displacing said device along said longitudinal length of said portion of said plurality of natural hairs an amount sufficient to dislodge said remaining portion of said braid from said portion of said natural hairs.

19. (original): The method of claim 17 including the further step of providing a comb section with said device and the still further step of passing said comb section through said portion of said natural hairs after the step of further displacing said device along said longitudinal length of said portion of said plurality of natural hairs an amount sufficient to dislodge said remaining portion of said braid from said portion of said natural hairs.